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THE
DEVIL and BROKER

A MERRY
MORAL

CHARACTER

OF A

PAWN BROKER

IN A MERRY

DIALOGUE.

With their manifold

frauds and deceits

discovered.

With the assistance of Roger L'Estrange.

London,

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A
DIALOGUE
BETWEEN A
PAWN-BROKER
AND A
COUNTRY-BUMKIN.

ACertain North-Country-Man by name *John Plugg*, supposing himself to be a man of excellent parts, resolves to spend no more of his precious time in his own Country, but intends to see the Metropolis of *England*, (of which he had heard much fame) not doubting but that his superabounding wit would make room for his entertainment, and as soon as he had got out of sight of his Habitation, he supposeth himself to be a mighty Traveller indeed, and after some time spent in this long and most dangerous Journey, he escapes safe to *London*, which place he thinks (if possible) is Heaven upon Earth, and thereupon swears he'll never return into his own Country more, and now he considers which way he might dispose of himself according to his merit, his blood being enflamed for an honorable employment. And not willing to undervalue his

his parts, he resolves to turn Merchant, but when he understands that he must cross the Sea or else could not be on that employment, swears he'll avoid drowning in the salt-waters, and unless he could sayl and traffick on dry ground it's no trade for him, but afterwards meeting with a man of an excellent function by Trade a Pawn-broker (forsooth) now they begin to discourse the matter roundly, how, and which way a man of parts might advance himself. The Pawn-broker tells *John Plugg* that if he will take his advice, and give him but a small summ of money (not exceeding twenty Pounds) he would make him free of the best Trade in *London*, and that he would put him into a way and make him understand the whole matter in a short time: this fancy tickled *John's* brayns till they itched again with desire to begin the trade, well, they agree in the matter, and now *John* is no bawble to be play'd withall.

John Plugg, Tell me what my trade must be, a Pawn-broker, a Pawn-broker, and what's that? you must tell me how I'lt come to be Master of Arts in that Trade. *Pawn*. Well, have but a little patience and I'll make you to understand (if you'll be but diligent) how to cheat both friend and foe, young and old, rich and poor, and that compleatly too, you must receive and resett all manner of goods that are brought to you, and if they are worth five Pounds you must say that they are not worth forty shillings, and that you will not lend above thirty on them, and if they do not believe you, then you must swear stoudtly that what you have said is true.

John, I'lt warrant you the first *Northern Oath*
A 2 which

which Iſt swear will crack one of your London Dale
boords of an inch thick.

Pawn, I confess it will be worſt with you at first,
for after you haue bin a little while at the Trade, you'll
learn to ſay and ſwear any thing, for we of that Trade
are as ready at it as a Vintners Boy is at filling a glaſſ
of Wine, and for every Pound which you lend out,
you muſt haue ſixpence a Moneth, which is thirty
Pounds per annum, interest in the Hundred.

John, what no more? *Pawn*, Now I love you for
that very ſaying. *John*, well is this all? *Pawn*,
No, this is but the plain dealing part in our Trade,
when you take in any Goods, you muſt haue ſome-
thing for entring their names, and if they fetch
them away the next day, you muſt be paid a moneths
Interest. — But with what Goods muſt I deal with-
al? *Pawn*, With all sorts, both with Mens cloaths,
and Womens cloaths, with Bed and with Boulster,
with Pot and with Pan and every thing.

John, And may I not wear the cloathes when I haue
them in my keeping? *Pawn*, Yes and let them out too,
John, That's well, then Iſt quickly haue a new Sute,
and I will tell you how I will wear them, I'll haue a
three cornered cap, and being that I am a wife man
and a good Schollar, for I haue learnt my horn-book
over and over again, and for ought I know Iſt be
taken for a Lord Judge, and I'll haue a ledder Doub-
let, a black Coat, a blue pair of Breeches and a yel-
low pare of Stockings and who can tell what Trade
I am on then, and I will haue a pair of ruffles, and a
great pair of sleeves, and a Presbyterian band, and
then if I ſhould meet with Old-Nick in a corner, he
would

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would never suspect me to be a Pawn-broker; so now I am ready for my Shop, I am a compleat person without doubt. *Pawn*, No, but hold, you have not half learnt your Trade yet. *John*, why, what's wanting now? *Pawn*, you must be of a strong constitution, and whett your tongue well before you begin, that it may cut out a hundred double Oaths before it be taken off the edge, for you must swear with the Knight of the Post, lye with the petty fogging Solicitor, and pretend with the quack Doctor.

John, These are hard words but if tell you what I can do, I can pretend as much honesty as any man and perform as little, and I can swear a hundred oaths in half a quarter of an hour, and for lying let me alone.

Pawn, Well now I see you will quickly be fit for our Trade, *John*, but how'st I do for a Shop, that will be large enough? for a little Shop will not hold a large Conscience, I mean such a Conscience as Pawn-brokers have, and this Trade will make it to stretch like a leadder sack when it is fill'd with good Ale, well I'll be promoting the trade daily, and in a short time I am shure to be Lord-Mayor, but pray you Mr. Broker may I not say and do what I will in my own Shop. *Pawn*, Yes I tell you you may say and do any thing what you please, for you cannot offend the Law, nor wrong your Conscience in this Trade, for we observe neither.

John, I believe you have told me the truth now, and for that very cause I doubt not but a blessing will lye at your Threshold, if you can but open the door and let it in, —— and now honest *John* begins his

Trade

Trade he's ready to uncase every body that passeth by
 saying, what do you lack? will you pawn your doublet or
 your breeches? at last comes a Country-man whose name
 is *Slash*, with a sute of cloathes to pawn, *John* fingers
 him into the Shop, and strikes a bargain with him
 presently, and no sooner is *slash* gone out of the Shop,
 but *John* begins to unsheathe, puts on *slash* his cloathes
 and views himself in a Looking-glaſs, and after he
 had admired himself, swears that the taylor was a
 rare workman without doubt or else he could never
 have made a sute so fit for his body and never took
 measure of him, and now he drives on the trade briskly,
 but shortly after comes *slash* to redeem his cloathes,
John says Sir I have been very careful of your cloathes,
 insomuch that they were never out of my sight, nor
 day off my back since I had them, and therefore I hope
 you'll give me something more then ordinary for my
 great care. — — *slash*, Sirra I'll have you before a
 Justice to make me satisfaction for the wrong you
 have done me. — — *John* cots'owns have me before a
 Justice, I care not for that for you cannot trouble me
 for it is part of my Trade, I have my liberty to get
 what I can any way. — — *John Plugg* is taken before
 a Justice. *John*, what has your Lord Justice to say
 to me? — — *John* no, not I say.

Justice, What Trade are you of? *John*, and please
 your Lord Justice I am an honest Trade. *Justice*, But
 what Trade is't? *John*, Your Lordship needs not
 question me any further for I never could lie in my
 life, but to affirme my words to be true I will tell
 you, and I am sure that my Trade will vouch for my
 honesty, I am a Pawn-broker. *Justice*, well I find now
 that

that you are not only a liar but an absolute cheat
and an extortioner too, *John* no and please your Lord
Justice I am not, for I take but thirty Pounds *per annum*
interest in the hundred and some small gains be-
sides, *Justice*, but what say you did you wear this
mans cloathes when they were in your keeping?
John, Yes yes, and please your Lord Justiceship,
that I did all the while I had them in my — *Justice*
Then it seems you are an absolute cheat indeed and
deserve little better then hanging, *John*, O no, and
please your Lord Justice to let me speak for my self and
Ist come well enough off I warrand you, your Lord-
ship cannot trouble me that I am sure of, for I can
neither offend the Law nor my own Conscience in this
Trade, and I am made free (to get gains any way) by
the act of palm brokers Parliament, and would your
Lord Justice have me to rebel and break law and cu-
stoms which have been so long kept and observed but
besides that *flash* wore my money, and why should
not I wear his cloaths : and now pray you my Lord
Justice let me go about my business what have you to
say to me now? I knew that I should come of bravely
at last, *Justice*, Nay but hold Sirra, you are not to come
of so bravely as you suppose, you have done with your
tale, but I have not done with you yet, *John*, Why
what would your Lordship do with me if you might
have your will? *Justice*, Nay Sirra I will have my
will and I'll send you to *Bridewell*, *John*, And what's
that and please your Lord? Justice, a place to whip and
beat you. O no good my Lord Justice, do not send me
there, for I do not love to be beaten, Good my Lord
Justice all these rogues Broakers thither and let me
escape

escape for this fact that I have committed is nothing amongst their greater Knaveries. O this Rogue Broker hath spoyled a man of brave worth the Justice seeing the poor man in such earnest, pardons him, away he goes towards his own Country with a perplexed mind to think that his Trade was come to this in so short a time, he prayes for the Justice, but curseth the Broker and swears that he'll never come to London more.

What Trade man is like to this!
That careth not a straw,
What ever he does
He feareth not the Law,
Made free by Parliament
not in Westminster Hall
But of Pauis Brokers thief of cheates all.

Now unknown Trade fare thee well,
Thy Shop with poor men is esteemed Hell.

FINIS

